

HalpinRobbins

Ecology & Environmental Services

Ecological Impact Assessment

47 Blue Boar Row, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 1DA
SU 14461 30064



Project No.: 01/054/007/01

Report Reference: 01/054/007/01_EcIA

Date: 03 February 2025

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Revision:	v1	Issue date:	04 September 2024
	v2		03 February 2025
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Validity:	Reports are generally valid between 12-18months, reports between 18 months and 3 years will require an updated site walkover to see if anything has changed which may require updating survey (s). Reports more than 3 years old are unlikely to still be valid and surveys are likely to need updating.		

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HalpinRobbins Limited was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment of a series of buildings at 47 Blue Boar Row, Salisbury, Wiltshire in support of a pre-application enquiry for internal and external alterations to facilitate the provision of five (Use Class C3) dwellings, subdivision of commercial space and associated works.

An Ecological Building Survey was undertaken on 31 July 2024. The table below summarises the proposed impacts of the development and the recommended mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

The table below summarises the proposed impacts of the development and the recommended mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures.

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	-
Birds	Harm during construction.	Moderate adverse impact at site level.	Nesting bird check immediately prior to works. Nesting opportunities to be provided as enhancement.	Negligible
Bats	None.	-	In the unlikely event that a bat is discovered during works, works will stop immediately and an ecologist will be contacted for advice.	-
Enhancements: Measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should include planting of a diverse mix of native shrub and other floral species as part of any proposed landscaping scheme. This could include green roofs and or green facades such as green walls. Bee bricks/planters and universal swift bricks should also be incorporated into the development where possible.				

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Background and Purpose of Survey*

HalpinRobbins Limited was commissioned to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment of a series of buildings at 47 Blue Boar Row, Salisbury, Wiltshire in support of a pre-application enquiry for internal and external alterations to facilitate the provision of five (Use Class C3) dwellings, subdivision of commercial space and associated works.

This report has been prepared by Carrie White, Senior Ecologist, ACIEEM who has over ten years ecological consultancy experience and holds survey licences for bats, dormice and great crested newt.

The methodology used for the assessment has been designed to examine the ecology of the site based on a field survey and an appraisal of the surrounding biodiversity using data obtained from a variety of sources to meet the following objectives:

- Establish the ecological baseline of the site by describing existing habitats
- Identify and describe all potentially significant ecological effects associated with the proposed development
- Identify and describe the mitigation and compensation measures required to ensure compliance with nature conservation legislation and address the potentially significant ecological effects
- Identify ecological enhancement measures appropriate to the project

Nature conservation legislation and policies relevant to the project are provided in Appendix C.

1.2 *Site Location and Description*

The development site is centred upon Ordnance Survey (O.S.) Grid Reference SU14461 30064 within the centre of Salisbury, Wiltshire. The location of the site is shown at Figure 1, Appendix A.

The site comprises a series of buildings, referred to as Buildings 1 to 6 for reporting purposes, located in the centre of Salisbury. The site is accessed from Blue Boar Row to the south. The immediate vicinity of the site is highly urbanised, the closest vegetation is a line of London plane trees located across the street on the square (c. 20m south). Street lighting is present on all neighbouring streets. The river Avon is location 200m to the west of the site.

1.3 Proposed Development

The client is seeking pre-application advice for internal and external alterations to facilitate the provision of five (Use Class C3) dwellings, subdivision of commercial space and associated works. Indicative plans have been provided by Atlas Planning in the email dated 30 January 2025, these are shown in Appendix D.

2 METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

2.1 Scope and Assessment

2.1.1 Zone of Influence

The 'zone of influence' of a project is the area within which ecological features may be impacted by the proposed works. This may often extend beyond the site boundary due to the distance that certain species travel, the nature of the potentially affected habitats and the site's location in relation to important ecological sites.

For this assessment the following zones have been considered:

- 10km surrounding Statutory Conservation Designations relating to bats (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).
- 1km surrounding other Statutory Conservation Designations and Non-Statutory sites of importance to biodiversity (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- 2km surrounding known records of protected and notable species.
- The site and its immediate surroundings.

2.1.2 Impact Assessment

Impact assessment has been carried out based on the outline proposals provided (detailed in Section 1.3 using the findings of the desk study and field survey.

Ecological features have been scoped in and out as appropriate based on the baseline conditions of the site; i.e. what ecological features the site is likely to support, and as appropriate to the scale of the proposals.

An assessment of the potential project impacts on each ecological receptor (i.e. designated sites, protected and notable habitats and species) is provided, including the magnitude, duration and significance of the anticipated effects to each receptor. An assessment of significance has been undertaken considering the local, national and international value to ecological features as informed by the desk study.

Table 1 below includes details on how the significance has been determined.

Table 1 – General criteria for significance

SIGNIFICANCE	CRITERIA
Major	Change resulting in breaches of legislation or exceeding statutory objectives.
	Likely to impact on sites designated for national or international importance.

SIGNIFICANCE	CRITERIA
	Likely to affect a large-scale area or a large number of species or populations on frequent or permanent basis.
	May result in an irreversible decline or rise.
Moderate	Unlikely to cause a breach of legislation but likely to impact on a site of regional or local importance.
	Likely to affect a small number of species or populations on a permanent basis.
Minor	Likely to impact an area or feature of local interest or importance.
	Likely to have a temporary impact on a small number of species or populations or be a recoverable impact.
Negligible	Indiscernible impact predicted.

Where possible significant ecological effects will be avoided through careful design and application of the mitigation hierarchy:

- **Avoidance**
Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features.
- **Mitigation**
Adverse effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed. Mitigation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being potentially significant (before mitigation) or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- **Compensation**
Where there are significant adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures. Compensation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being significant or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- **Enhancements**
Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

2.2 Desk Study

Biological records from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) were obtained comprising bat species records within a 2km radius of the site.

Data search results only give an indication of species presence in a location. The absence of recent records for certain species in an area may be due to low levels of biological recording or the non-submission of records, rather than absence. Many species records are also at low geographical resolution and do not indicate their exact location and often provide little detail about abundance.

Web-based DEFRA resource Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was consulted to identify Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within a 1km radius of the site surveyed, and for Statutory sites designated for bats within a 10km radius of the site. A search for granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) within a 5km radius relating to bats was also undertaken.

A review of the Wiltshire Council planning portal was undertaken in August 2024 to identify any previous applications and ecological findings relevant to the current proposals.

2.3 Ecological Building Survey (including Preliminary Roost Assessment)

The structures were inspected both externally and internally using a surveyor's ladder, high powered torch, bat detector and video endoscope where necessary to assess the potential for the structures to hold nesting birds and roosting bats.

Evidence of nesting birds could include feathers, nesting material, eggs and potentially pellets. Evidence of roosting bats could include live animals, carcasses, droppings and feeding remains. A rating of between none and high suitability was assigned to the structures based on their likelihood of supporting roosting bats. If a bat was identified in a structure during the survey the structure was recorded as a confirmed roost (Collins, 2023).

- **None:** No habitat features likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year.
- **Negligible:** No obvious habitat features likely used to be used by roosting bats.
- **Low:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not classic hibernation site but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
- **Moderate:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
- **High:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic hibernation site.

Due accessibility and location of certain aspects of the buildings in close proximity to neighbouring properties not all elevations were visible to the surveyor.

Internal areas above ground level were inaccessible and unsafe to enter and therefore a thorough manual inspection of the internal areas of the buildings was not possible.

Birds' nests in concealed locations may not have been visible to the surveyor.

Not all potential bat roosting features are accessible to the surveyor and therefore assessments are based upon the potential for these features to provide suitable roosting opportunities. It is not always possible to provide definitive assessments of a species presence/likely absence at a site and so in the absence of direct evidence, assessments and recommendations are based on the presence of suitable habitat within/adjacent to a site and the results of species records within the desk study data.

2.4 Personnel

The survey was undertaken by Carrie White, Senior Ecologist, ACIEEM, Natural England Bat Class Licence CL18 (Level 2) 2015-12207-CLS-CLS, Natural England Dormouse Class Licence CL10a (Level 1) 2015-1192-CLS-CLS, Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Licence CL08 (Level 1) 2015-18955-CLS-CLS on 31 July 2024.

3 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

3.1 Relevant Ecological Information from Planning Portal

A review of the Wiltshire Council planning portal did not identify any applications of ecological relevance to the project.

3.2 Designated Sites

3.2.1 Statutory Designated Sites

There are three statutory designated sites within a 1km radius of the site; River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC), River Avon System Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and East Harnham Meadows SSSI. Details are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within 1km of the site. Source: MAGIC.

NAME	DESIGNATION	DISTANCE FROM THE SITE	DESCRIPTION
River Avon	Special Area of Conservation SAC	c. 170m west	Annex 1 habitat (water courses of plain to montane levels with <i>Ranunculus fluitantis</i>) and Annex II species (Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> , sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> , brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> , Atlantic salmon, <i>Salmo salar</i> , bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i>) both primary reasons for designation.
River Avon System	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	c. 170m west	River Avon and it's tributaries are of national and international importance to wildlife communities.
East Harnham Meadows	SSSI	c. 930m south	Narrow island in River Avon with swamp vegetation.

A map, provided by MAGIC, of the Statutory Nature Conservation Designations in relation to the site is shown at Appendix B.

There are no Special Area of Conservation (SAC) sites designated for bats within 10km of the site.

3.3 Ecological Building Survey

The site contains 6 connected buildings, in a linear alignment (north to south), set back from the main square in Salisbury city centre. Buildings have been referenced 1-6 for reporting purposes. Building descriptions are detailed in Table 3 below. Figure 2 in Appendix A shows the location of the buildings.

Table 3. Building Descriptions.

Building Reference	Description
1	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14458 30105 is c. 12m in length, 5m in width and c. 6m in height. The terracotta tiled steeply pitched hipped roof has a central apex. Brick built, with a lower and upper level.
2	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14466 30105 is c. 13m in length, 11m in width and c. 3m in height. The flat roof is comprised of roofing felt. The building is brick-built and has had a recent fire.
3	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14463 30095 is c. 6m in length, 5m in width and 9m in height. The terracotta tiled steep sloping roof has gable ends. The building is brick-built with mortar in good condition.
4	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14461 30090 is c. 8m in length, 6m in width and 10m in height. The terracotta tiled steep roof has a central apex with gable ends, with hanging slate tiles on its western gable.
5	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14462 30082 is c. 9m in length, 7m in width and 10.5m in height. The slate-tiled moderately sloping roof has a gable to the north and a hipped roof to the south. Timber hanging tiles are present on the western elevation.
6	Located at O.S. Grid Reference SU 14462 30071 is c. 10m in length, 9m in width and 12m in height. The terracotta tiled gently sloping roof has hips to the south as well as a flat roof section.

3.4 Birds

3.4.1 Ecological Building Survey

Parts of the buildings are inaccessible to birds due to the presence of bird netting. An active feral pigeon *Columba livia* nest was identified on a wall top in Building 1 (Target Note 1, Figure 2). Building 1 contains a large accumulation of pigeon droppings on the upper level and has been used by pigeons for a long period. Bird droppings were also noted on the internal 1st floor of Building 6 (Target Note 2, Figure 2).

The buildings are therefore being used by at least one bird species and has potential be used during future nesting seasons.

3.5 Bats

3.5.1 Desk Study

A total of 1247 records of bats were identified within a 2km radius of the site. Species recorded include barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* (6), Bechstein's bat *Myotis bechsteinii* (1), Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii* (1), Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* (47), Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* (24), whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* (6), whiskered/Brandts' bat *Myotis mystacinus/brandtii* (10), brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* (26), common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* (225), Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii* (2), soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* (571), greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* (5), lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (2), Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri* (12), noctule *Nyctalus noctula* (62), serotine *Eptesicus serotinus* (54), unidentified *Myotis* species *Myotis* sp. (127), unidentified long-eared species *Plecotus* sp. (14), unidentified pipistrelle species *Pipistrellus* sp. (27), unidentified *Nyctalus* species (4) and unidentified bat species (21).

Of the records, 101 are known bat roosts, however their exact locations are withheld but 10 records are from within the same grid square SU 1430 as the site. Also located within this grid square is the vegetated corridor of the River Avon, c. 170m to the west. It is considered most likely the bat roosts records are associated with buildings bordering this highly suitable foraging and commuting bat corridor.

A further 11 records of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats were identified within a 5km radius including Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, and serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*. The closest record is located c. 1.2km to the west concerning common pipistrelle and lesser horseshoe bat, outside of the city centre.

3.5.2 Ecological Building Survey

Table 4 below summarises any evidence of bats identified, potential roosting and access features noted and an assessment of each building's suitability to support roosting bats.

Table 4. Findings and assessment of bat roost potential.

Building Reference	Findings	Bat Roost Suitability
	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	

Building Reference	Findings	Bat Roost Suitability
Building 1	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	Negligible
Building 2	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	Negligible
	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	
Building 3	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	Negligible
	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	
Building 4	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	Negligible
	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	
Building 5	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	Negligible
	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	
Building 6	No bats or evidence of bats were identified.	Negligible
	Building accessible to bats with superficially suitable roosting locations however located in highly urbanised setting with no surrounding vegetation and high levels of street lighting.	

There is no bordering vegetation which could provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bat species. The site was assessed as comprising habitats of negligible value to foraging and commuting bats.

4 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS, MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION MEASURES

The mitigation and compensation recommendations provided are based on the principles of established best practice guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the local planning authority and other relevant organisations. Where applicable, the cumulative effects potentially arising from other developments are discussed in this section.

It is recommended that a Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Plan (BMEP) is produced and submitted with the planning application.

4.1 Designated Sites

4.1.1 Potential Impacts

Site proposals are not considered likely to impact nearby designated sites due to the small scale and nature of the development.

4.2 Birds

4.2.1 Potential Impacts

Building demolition/conversion has a high potential to damage/ destroy the nests of wild birds, resulting in a moderate adverse impact at a site level.

4.2.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

The following mitigation measures will be incorporated to avoid, mitigate and compensate the identified impacts to birds:

- Works which have potential to impact nesting birds (i.e. building demolition and conversion) must be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season (i.e. avoiding the period March to mid-September). If works cannot be timed sensitively, a check by an ecologist for nesting birds the day before works are due to commence will be required. Any active bird nests identified will be left in situ until the young have fully fledged.

4.2.3 Residual Effects

The above measures will address the anticipated impacts of the proposals to birds; there are no expected residual effects.

4.3 Bats

4.3.1 Potential Impacts

The site does not comprise any habitats which support potential bat roost features. The project is not anticipated to result in impacts to roosting bats. In the unlikely event that a bat is found during works, works must stop immediately and an ecologist contacted for advice.

5 ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

Enhancement measures are recommendations over and above the mitigation required, which aim to enhance biodiversity in line with national and local planning policy and are deemed appropriate for the site and its proposals.

- Measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should include planting of a diverse mix of native shrubs and other floral species as part of any proposed landscaping scheme.
- Green roofs could be considered on-site. These come in a variety of forms; extensive planting of low-maintenance plants typically from native sedum and stonecrop families and or green facades such as green walls could be incorporated into the proposed scheme. More information can be found at Natural England Green Infrastructure:
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>
- Bee bricks/planters should be incorporated into proposed plans to provide shelter for invertebrates benefiting from native landscaping. Bee bricks should be incorporated at least 1m from the ground, free from vegetation obstructing the entrances and located in a sunny south-facing location. Should a green roof be incorporated, Bee bricks should be placed near this created habitat. Bee bricks/planters can be purchased from wildcare.co.uk or nhbs.com.
- A series of bird nest boxes should be installed within any new buildings, swift bricks have the benefit of not only being suitable for swifts but other small birds present in the urban environment. Universal swift bricks should be located on a north/east elevation, at least 5m from ground level and entrance holes spaced at least 40cm apart. Universal built-in swift bricks can be purchased from wildcare.co.uk or nhbs.com.

6 CONCLUSIONS TABLE

Table 5. Summary of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for the site: 47 Blue Boar Row.

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	-
Birds	Harm during construction.	Moderate adverse impact at site level.	Nesting bird check immediately prior to works. Nesting opportunities to be provided as enhancement.	Negligible
Bats	None.	-	In the unlikely event that a bat is discovered during works, work will stop immediately and an ecologist will be contacted for advice.	-
Enhancements: Measures to enhance the site for biodiversity should include planting of a diverse mix of native shrub and other floral species as part of any proposed landscaping scheme. This could include green roofs and or green facades such as green walls. Bee bricks/planters and universal swift bricks should also be incorporated into the development where possible.				

7 REFERENCES

CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

Collins, J (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Magic Map (2024). Natural England. (at <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>).

Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC). Data search. August 2024.

8 SITE PHOTOS



Plate 1. Southern elevation of Building 1.



Plate 2. Internal upper floor of Building 1.



Plate 3. Western elevation of Building 1.



Plate 4. Location of nesting pigeon at wall top (TN1).



Plate 5. Building 2 internal.



Plate 6. Building 2 internal.



Plate 7. Western elevation of Building 3.



Plate 8. Northern roof faces of Building 3, Building 4 and Building 6.



Plate 9. Southern and western elevations of Buildings 1 and 3.



Plate 10. Western elevation of Building 5.



Plate 11. Southern elevation of Building 6.



Plate 12. Northern elevation of Building 6.

APPENDIX A – FIGURES

On following pages.



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Key:

Site location

Figure 1.

47 Blue Boar Row
Ecological Impact Assessment
Site Location in Wider Landscape

Project No.: 01/054/007/01

Date: 12/08/2024



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Key:

Building Reference

- TN - Target Note
 - 1 - Pigeon nest at wall top
 - 2 - Bird droppings internally

Produced using Google satellite & QGIS

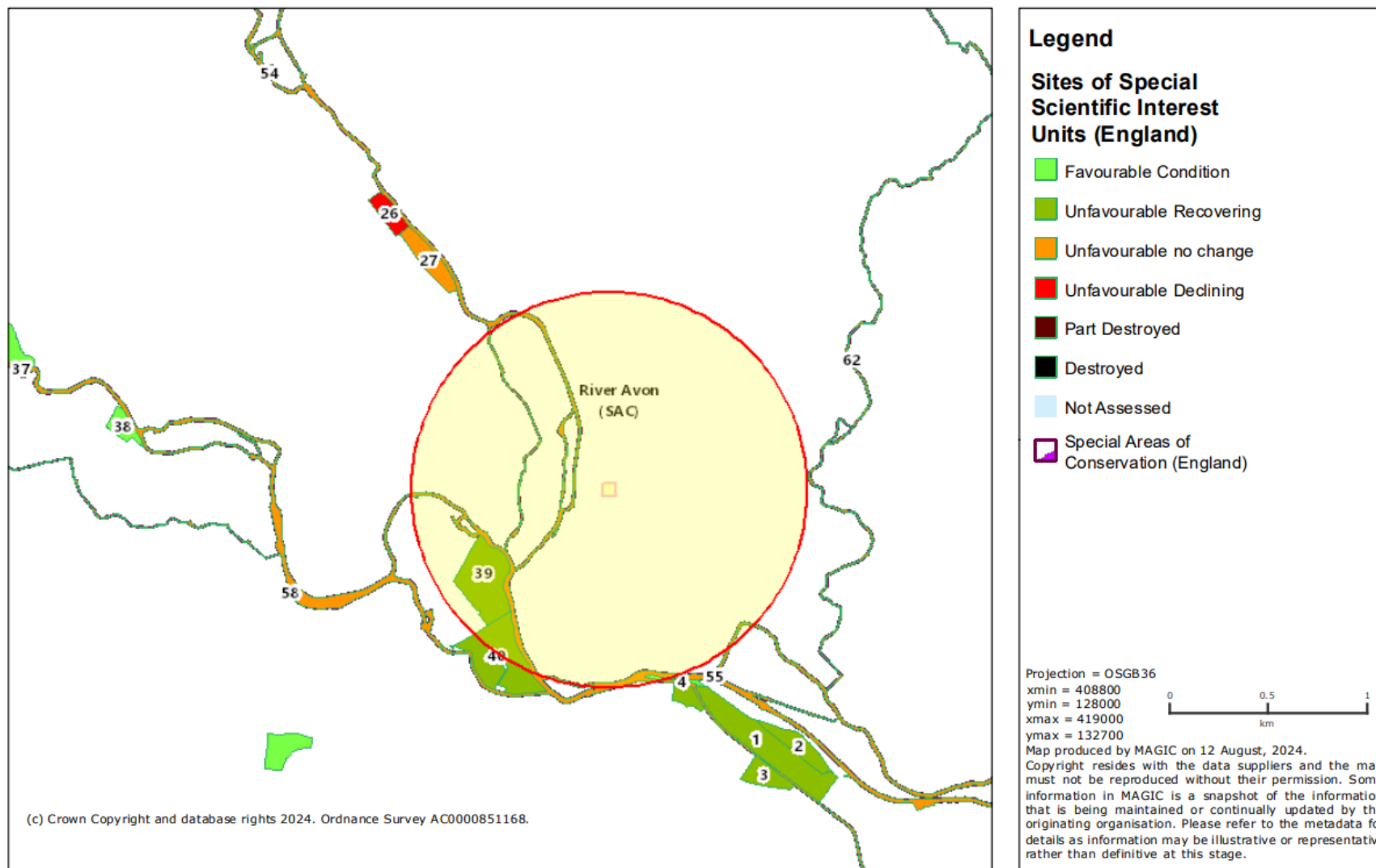
Figure 2.

47 Blue Boar Row
Ecological Impact Assessment
Ecological Building Survey

Project No.: 01/054/007/01

Date: 13/08/2024

APPENDIX B – STATUTORY DESIGNATED SITES



APPENDIX C - RELEVANT WILDLIFE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Ecological Feature	Legislation / Policy
Birds	Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is illegal to take, damage or destroy the nests of wild birds whilst being built or in use. Bird species also listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) receive additional protection including protection from intentional or reckless disturbance when they are nesting or rearing dependant young.
Bats	British bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure bats or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of bats which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence.
UK Priority Species/ Habitats	UK Priority Species/Habitats are those that have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.
Biodiversity Net Gain	The Environment Act 2022 and the National Planning Policy Framework require all developments to show a net gain for biodiversity.

